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(54) Title: CHEESE SAUCE AND METHOD FOR THE PREPARATION THEREOF

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to a method for the preparation of a cheese sauce and/or mixture based on cheese that is suitable for the preparation of a cheese sauce by an end user/consumer, which method comprises at least the following steps: (a) the provision of a processed cheese base, in particular a processed cheese base based on fresh cheese; (b) mixing the processed cheese base from step (a) with a roux. The invention furthermore relates to a cheese product, in particular in the form of a packaged commercial product, that can be processed/reconstituted by the end user to give a cheese sauce according to the invention, for example by adding water and optionally by heating.



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## **Cheese sauce and method for the preparation thereof**

The present invention relates to a food product based on cheese.

More particularly the present invention relates to a sauce based on cheese, as well as  
5 a method for the preparation thereof.

The invention furthermore relates to a cheese product, in particular in the form of a packaged commercial product, that can be processed/reconstituted by the end user to produce a cheese sauce according to the invention, for example by adding water and optionally by heating. The invention also relates to a method for the preparation of this  
10 cheese product.

Cheese sauces are currently prepared on the basis of processed cheese (powder). According to the invention a cheese sauce, or powder therefor, is now provided on the basis of processed cheese and a roux.

A particular advantage of the cheese sauce according to the invention is that the latter  
15 can be prepared with a high cheese content, in particular a high fresh cheese content, that can be 40 % (m/m) or more, and up to 70 % (m/m) or more, of the final sauce.

Further advantages of the cheese sauce according to the invention are the ready solubility, no lumps being formed; in addition to conventional processing (preparation) of the cheese sauce in the kitchen on the hob or, for example, gas cooker, the cheese sauce  
20 can be processed (prepared) in a microwave; there is no separation of liquid and once a sauce has been prepared it can be re-heated.

In a first aspect the application therefore relates to a method for the preparation of a cheese sauce and/or a mixture based on cheese that is suitable for the preparation of a cheese sauce by an end user/consumer, which method comprises at least the following  
25 steps:

- (a) the provision of a processed cheese base, in particular a processed cheese base based on fresh cheese;
- (b) mixing the processed cheese base from step (a) with a roux.

The processed cheese base provided in step (a) is preferably used in step (b) whilst  
30 this base is kept at a temperature of at least 40 °C, preferably at least 70 °C and particularly preferentially at a temperature of 85 - 110 °C. With this procedure the method of the

invention will as a rule comprise the following further steps after mixing the roux with/through the processed cheese base:

- (c) allowing the mixture obtained in step (b) to solidify and/or
- (d) comminuting/finely dividing the mixture obtained in step (b) or step (c).

5       The mixture obtained after step (b), and in particular the solidified and finely divided mixture obtained after step (c) and/or step (d), will as a rule be marketed as a packaged product and/or supplied to the end user/consumer in some other way. The end user will then further process this mixture to produce the final cheese sauce according to the invention, in particular by means of the following steps:

- 10       (e) adding water or another suitable liquid; and/or
- (f) stirring and/or heating.

The cheese sauce thus obtained, as well as the mixture obtained after one of steps (b), (c) and/or (d), in particular in the form of a packaged commercial product, constitute further aspects of the invention.

15       The processed cheese base used in the method of the invention will as a rule be essentially the same as a known processed cheese.

         This processed cheese (base) can be prepared in a manner known per se, that is to say by mixing one or more cheeses, cheese varieties and/or cheese constituents with one or more processing salts known per se and optionally further constituents for processed  
20       cheese which are known per se.

         All cheeses, cheese varieties and/or cheese constituents known per se, including low fat, medium fat and full fat cheese varieties; mild, mature or extra mature cheeses; blue cheeses and the like; or a suitable combination thereof, depending on the desired taste of the final sauce, can be used as the starting material with this method.

25       Preferably, fresh cheeses, cheese varieties and/or cheese constituents are used.

         Examples of suitable cheese varieties are: Maaslander, Gouda, Edam, Cheddar, Emmenthaler, Gruyere, blue cheeses such as Roquefort, Gorgonzola, Danish Blue, or a suitable combination thereof.

         Examples of suitable processing salts for use in the processed cheese base are, inter  
30       alia, (poly)phosphates, such as the sodium or potassium salts of mono- di- or polyphosphoric acid; the sodium or potassium salts of citric acid; tartaric acid or salts thereof; lactic acid or salts thereof; malic acid or salts thereof, or other suitable emulsifying salts; or a suitable combination thereof.

Examples of suitable commercially available processing salts (mixtures) are Solva® 35 and Solva® 120 from Giulini.

The processed cheese base can also contain one or more further suitable constituents and/or additives for processed cheeses, such as one or more:

- 5    - binders, thickeners and/or stabilisers, for example sodium caseinate, whey proteins or other suitable milk protein preparations; gums, such as locust bean gum, guar gum, xanthan gum, carob bean gum, carrageenan gum; alginates, such as E400 - 405;
- emulsifiers, for example lecithins or fatty acid mono- or di-glycerides;
- preservatives, for example sorbic acid or the sodium or potassium salts thereof,
- 10    - propionic acid or the sodium or potassium salts thereof, nisin;
- colorants, for example annatto extract; beta-carotene; paprika oleoresin; and flavourings and/or flavour intensifiers, for example sodium glutamate, cheese flavourings, cheese powders;
- means for controlling the pH, for example a suitable (organic) acid such as
- 15    phosphoric acid, citric acid, acetic acid, lactic acid or the sodium or potassium salts thereof; sodium bicarbonate, calcium carbonate, glucono-delta-lactone;

in suitable amounts known per se. Optionally one or more fats or fat constituents can also be added as further additives, in addition to the quantity of fat originating from the cheese.

20    Mixing of the constituents of the processed cheese will as a rule be carried out in a suitable mixer or melting pot, with heating, for example to a temperature higher than 70 °C, in particular in the range from 85 to 110 °C, for example by the use of (direct) steam, and optionally with mixing or stirring, until a homogeneous mixture is obtained.

25    During this operation the cheese constituents will usually be fed to the melting pot in a crushed, chopped, grated, ground or other finely divided/comminuted form. More preferentially the cheese constituents will be crushed/finely divided, for example in a suitable mill or other grinding device; this will promote the formation of a homogeneous processed cheese mixture.

30    A small amount of water can optionally also be added to the processed cheese mixture/the melting pot, for example in order to facilitate mixing of the constituents. However, this is not required and the addition of large amounts of water is preferably avoided.

In general, the processed cheese base will have the following composition:

- cheese or cheese constituents: 1 - 95 % (m/m), preferably 40 - 95 % (m/m)
- processing salts: 1 - 4 % (m/m)
- binder: 2 - 15 % (m/m)
- preservative: 0 - 0.25 % (m/m)
- 5 - water (added) 0 - 20 % (m/m)
- further additives: 0 - 30 % (m/m)

where the total constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the processed cheese base.

The roux is then added to the processed cheese base thus obtained, kept in the mixer/melting pot at a temperature of more than 40 °C, preferably more than 70 °C and in particular in the range from 85 to 110 °C. For this operation the roux will as a rule have been prepared separately from the processed cheese base and/or in advance, as will now be described.

The roux can be any (binder) mixture known per se for the preparation of sauces, such as a roux that is used in the industrial preparation of sauces. Preferably, a mixture based on one or more suitable fats or fat constituents, a meal or a flour and a suitable starch constituent or additive, for example a modified starch, is used.

It is possible, for example, to use animal fats, such as butter, or vegetable fats such as, for example, palm fat, or a suitable combination thereof as (source of) fats.

The fats preferably have a melting point in the range from 10 to 40 °C and optionally a portion of the fat fraction consists of solidified fats with melting points of up to 60 °C.

The following may be mentioned as meal or flour: wheat flour, rice flour or meal, potato, millet, rye, oats, barley, maize, tapioca and soya starch, or another suitable type of meal or flour; or a suitable combination thereof.

The following may be mentioned as starch constituent: maize starch, modified starch or another suitable (source of) starch; or a suitable combination thereof.

The roux can furthermore contain one or more other additives for a roux which are known per se, such as herbs and spices; or a suitable combination thereof; in amounts known per se.

More particularly, the roux can have the following composition:

- 30 - fats or fat constituents: 25 - 80 % (m/m)
- meal or flour: 15 - 50 % (m/m)
- starch: 5 - 25 % (m/m)
- further additives: 0 - 4 % (m/m)

where the total of the constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the roux.

The roux can be prepared by mixing the abovementioned constituents, in particular with heating, in particular to a temperature of at least 40 °C, preferably at least 70 - 110 °C and more particularly to approximately 110 °C. Preferably the constituents of the roux are  
 5 kept at this temperature for no longer than 30 minutes, more preferentially no longer than approximately 10 minutes, during mixing.

The roux thus obtained can then be added in this form to the processed cheese base, but it can also first be allowed to solidify (i.e. by cooling) for (temporary) storage and can then be added to a freshly prepared processed cheese base for the preparation of a cheese  
 10 sauce according to the invention.

For this operation the roux will as a rule be fed in grated, ground or another comminuted/finely divided form to the mixer or melting pot with the freshly prepared processed cheese base (the processed cheese base – as stated above – preferably being held at a temperature of more than approximately 40 °C, preferably more than approximately  
 15 70 °C and in particular at a temperature in the range from 85 to 110 °C), optionally with mixing or stirring. The roux and the processed cheese base can also be metered simultaneously into a suitable mixer, optionally with stirring.

During and/or after mixing the processed cheese base and the roux, the mixture will as a rule only be mixed/stirred and will not be further heated. The final temperature of the  
 20 mixture after mixing the processed cheese base and the roux will as a rule be approximately 40 - 75 °C.

The processed cheese base and the roux will as a rule be mixed in a mass ratio of 95 : 5 to 5 : 95 and in particular will be mixed in a mass ratio of 90 : 10 to 50 : 50.

Optionally yet further desired constituents, such as herbs, spices and flavourings, can  
 25 also be added, in suitable amounts, when mixing the processed cheese base and the roux.

The composition of the mixture of the processed cheese base and the roux which is thus obtained can be as follows:

- |    |                                |  |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| -  | cheese or cheese constituents: | 1 - 95 % (m/m), preferably 40 - 95 % (m/m) |
| -  | processing salts:              | 0.05 - 4 % (m/m), preferably 1 - 4 % (m/m) |
| 30 | - binder:                      | 2 - 15 % (m/m)                             |
| -  | preservative:                  | 0 - 0.25 % (m/m)                           |
| -  | (constituents of the) roux:    | 5 - 95 % (m/m)                             |
- of which:

- fats or fat constituents: 25 - 80 % (m/m)
- meal or flour: 15 - 50 % (m/m)
- starch: 5 - 25 % (m/m)
- further additives: 0 - 30 % (m/m)

5 where the total of the constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the mixture of the processed cheese base and the roux.

It will be clear to those skilled in the art that all the abovementioned constituents of the cheese sauce according to the invention must be suitable for use in foods, and preferably compatible with the other constituents of the mixture.

10 The mixture thus obtained is then allowed to solidify, for example by allowing the mixture – optionally after transferring from the melting pot into a suitable container – to cool from the mixing temperature down to a temperature of 25 °C or less, in particular a temperature of approximately 0 to 10 °C, for, for example, 24 to 48 hours, optionally in a cold store.

15 The solidified mixture thus obtained can then be finely divided/comminuted in a suitable manner, for example by crushing, chopping, cutting and preferably by grinding or grating at approximately 8 °C to give strands or a coarse or fine powder. The product thus obtained can then be packed, for example in a bag, a box, a can or another suitable container, and is marketed in this form. The product can optionally also be marketed as a  
20 frozen product, in the form of a block or, for example, by freezing the powder or strands, obtained after grating, at a temperature of approximately -18 to -30 °C; optionally already in the container in which the powder will be marketed.

The mixture obtained in the above manner, optionally in the form of a packaged commercial product and/or in the form of a frozen product, forms an important aspect of  
25 the present invention.

This mixture can then be further processed or prepared by the end user or consumer to give the final cheese sauce according to the invention. This will as a rule be carried out by mixing/reconstituting the mixture with water or with another suitable liquid, such as milk or wine, optionally by/with stirring or heating, for example in a bain marie or in a  
30 microwave. For this preparation the water will be added in a suitable quantity, depending on the specific composition of the mixture and the desired end product, for example a quantity of 50 to 90 % (m/m) water.

The cheese sauce according to the invention is then ready to eat and can be served either cold or hot, in which context it will usually be preferable to serve hot.

The cheese sauce according to the invention can optionally also be further treated/processed by the end user/consumer, for example by adding one or more desired  
5 further constituents or ingredients. The cheese sauce of the invention can also be processed or incorporated in meals by the end user/consumer.

It will therefore be clear to the person skilled in the art that the invention is not restricted to any end use or any treatment/processing by the end user or the consumer, as long as the starting material used is the mixture described above and/or as long as the  
10 mixture described above is used. For instance, the mixture described above and/or the cheese sauce according to the invention can also be used as a constituent in the (industrial) preparation of other food products, such as snacks, ready meals, toppings and dressings and the like, which optionally are heated up and/or further treated/processed before consumption.

15 The cheese sauce according to the invention (or the mixture described above) is in particular characterised by the presence of a content of one or more processing salts, that is to say one or more of the abovementioned processing salts. More particularly, the content of processing salts will be 0.05 to 4 %, based on the constituents of the mixture described above (i.e. without the water to be added by the end user and without the optional further  
20 constituents added by the end user).

Furthermore, compared with the known cheese sauces based on processed cheese (powder), the cheese sauce according to the invention (or the mixture described above) is characterised by the presence of (the one or more constituents of) the roux, in the quantities indicated above.

25 Furthermore, the cheese sauce according to the invention is preferably also characterised by a high content of cheese or cheese constituents, which can be 50 % (m/m) or more and even 70 % (m/m) or more, based on the constituents of the mixture described above (i.e. without the water to be added by the end user and any further constituents added by the end user).

30 The following non-limiting example illustrates the invention in more detail.



**Example**

A processed cheese (base) was prepared from 673.4 kg fresh, finely divided Maaslander, 8.7 kg Solva 35®; 8.7 kg Solva® 120; 111.3 kg water; 1.9 kg potassium sorbate and 41.7 kg sodium caseinate. The preparation was carried out by mixing the constituents in a melting pot, with heating by direct steam to a temperature of 85 - 110 °C, until a homogeneous mixture was obtained.

A roux was prepared from 61.6 kg palm fat having a melting point of approximately 35 °C, 20.8 kg Rafel C (a solidified fat fraction with a melting point of approximately 50 – 60 °C marketed by Karlshamus), 46.5 kg wheat flour and 25.4 kg maize starch.

The constituents of the roux were mixed by stirring, with heating to approximately 110 °C (for no longer than 10 minutes). The roux was then cooled and grated.

The processed cheese base and grated roux were added to a mixing trough and mixed, the mixture temperature being maintained at approximately 60 - 70 °C, without further heating. During this operation 154.3 kg of the roux was added to the abovementioned constituents of the processed cheese base in their entirety.

The mixture thus obtained was transferred immediately into a container and allowed to solidify by cooling down to a temperature of approximately 2 °C for approximately 48 hours. The mixture was then grated at approximately 8 °C and packed in bags.

The mixture thus obtained was mixed with water or milk or wine, with heating and stirring, a cheese sauce according to the invention being obtained. The sauce was homogeneous without lumps.

## CLAIMS

1. Method for the preparation of a cheese sauce and/or a mixture based on cheese that is suitable for the preparation of a cheese sauce by an end user/consumer, which method
- 5 comprises at least the following steps:
- (a) the provision of a processed cheese base, in particular a processed cheese base based on fresh cheese;
  - (b) mixing the processed cheese base from step (a) with a roux.

- 10 2. Method according to Claim 1, wherein the processed cheese base provided in step (a) is used in step (b) whilst this base is kept at a temperature of at least 40 °C, preferably at least 70 °C and particularly preferentially at a temperature of 85 - 110 °C.

3. Method according to Claim 2, which method comprises the following steps after
- 15 mixing the roux and the processed cheese base:
- (c) allowing the mixture obtained in step (b) to solidify and/or
  - (d) comminuting/finely dividing the mixture obtained in step (b) or step (c).

4. Method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the processed cheese
- 20 base provided in step (a) has the following composition:

- |    |                                |  |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| -  | cheese or cheese constituents: | 1 - 95 % (m/m), preferably 40 - 95 % (m/m) |
| -  | processing salts:              | 1 - 4 % (m/m)                              |
| -  | binder:                        | 2 - 15 % (m/m)                             |
| -  | preservative:                  | 0 - 0.25 % (m/m)                           |
| 25 | - water (added)                | 0 - 20 % (m/m)                             |
| -  | further additives:             | 0 - 30 % (m/m)                             |

where the total constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the processed cheese base.

5. Method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the processed cheese
- 30 base is prepared on the basis of fresh cheese or cheese constituents.

6. Method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the processed cheese base is prepared on the basis of Maaslander, Gouda, Edam, Cheddar, Emmenthaler, Gruyere or blue cheeses such as Roquefort, Gorgonzola, Danish blue.

5        7. Method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the roux used in step (b) has the following composition:

- fats or fat constituents:        25 - 80 % (m/m)
- meal or flour:                    15 - 50 % (m/m)
- starch:                            5 - 25 % (m/m)
- 10 - further additives:            0 - 4 % (m/m)

where the total of the constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the roux.

8. Method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the processed cheese base and the roux are mixed in a mass ratio of 95 : 5 to 5 : 95, in particular in a mass ratio  
15 of 90 : 10 to 50 : 50.

9. Method according to one of the preceding claims, comprising the following further steps:

- (e) the addition of water or another suitable liquid to the mixture from step (b), step (c)  
20 or step (d); optionally with
- (f) stirring and/or heating;  
with the creation of a cheese sauce.

10. Method according to Claim 9, wherein steps (e) and (f) are carried out by the  
25 consumer/end user, in particular immediately prior to consumption.

11. Mixture of a processed cheese base and a roux that can be made into a cheese sauce by adding water and optionally by stirring and/or heating, which mixture can be/has been obtained in accordance with the method of one of Claims 1 - 6.

30

12. Mixture according to Claim 11 that has the following composition:

- cheese or cheese constituents:        1 - 95 % (m/m), preferably 40 - 95 % (m/m)
- processing salts:                        0.05 - 4 % (m/m), preferably 1 - 4 % (m/m)

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- binder: 2 - 15 % (m/m)
  - preservative: 0 - 0.25 % (m/m)
  - (constituents of the) roux: 5 - 95 % (m/m)  
of which:
- 5
- fats or fat constituents: 25 - 80 % (m/m)
  - meal or flour: 15 - 50 % (m/m)
  - starch: 5 - 25 % (m/m)
  - further additives: 0 - 30 % (m/m)

10 where the total of the constituents will be 100 % (m/m), based on the mixture of the processed cheese base and the roux.

13. Mixture according to Claim 11 or 12 in the form of a powder, optionally a frozen powder.

15 14. Mixture according to one of Claims 11 - 13, in the form of a packaged product, in a suitable container such as a bag, can or box.

15. Cheese sauce obtainable/obtained according to the method of Claim 9 or 10 and/or obtained from a mixture according to one of Claims 11 - 14.

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/NL 00/00781

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 A23L1/40 A23C19/09 A23C19/082

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 A23L A23C

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, FSTA

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	FR 1 087 717 A (GILLET) 28 February 1955 (1955-02-28) the whole document ---	1,5,6, 8-11
X	GB 2 267 207 A (FUJI OIL COMPANY) 1 December 1993 (1993-12-01) page 3, line 5 -page 4, line 28; claims 1-9; example 1 ---	1,5,11
A	GB 928 204 A (NATIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS CORPORATION) page 2, line 25 - line 45; example; table 1 ---	1,8-11
A	FR 2 615 697 A (ENTREMONT SA) 2 December 1988 (1988-12-02) page 1, line 8 - line 12 page 3, line 1 -page 4, line 14; claims ---	1,4,5
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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents :

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# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

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## C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	<p>DATABASE WPI  Week 199704  Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB;  AN 1997-036887  XP002139526  &amp; JP 08 294375 A (SHOWA SANGYO CO.)  abstract</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p>	1
A	<p>DATABASE WPI  Week 198442  Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB;  AN 1984-260695  XP002139527  &amp; JP 59 159757 A (OTA),  9 October 1984 (1984-10-09)  abstract  &amp; PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN  vol. 9, no. 5 (C-260),  10 January 1985 (1985-01-10)  &amp; JP 59 159757 A (TERUO OOTA),  10 September 1984 (1984-09-10)  abstract</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p>	1
A	<p>W.FENNEMA E.A.: "Winkler Prins Culinaire  Encyclopedie"  1984 , ELSEVIER , AMSTERDAM,NL XP002139525  014282  blz. 70: Bechamelsaus  blz. 426: Mornaysaus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p>	1,11

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Information on patent family members

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